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A LITTLE WIDOW IS A DANGEROUS THING



Newport, Sept. 28.

WILL Mrs. Seth Barton French, one of the handsomest and richest widows of New York, say "Yes" to that modern Croesus of international society, James J. Van Alen, and thus cause his charming daughter, Miss May Van Alen, much anguish of mind, negative all her step-mamma-against stratagems and battles, and destroy once and for all time Mr. Van Alen's fondness for widows?

In the clubs on Fifth avenue and in Newport odds are three to one that she will.

There have been many widows in Mr. Van Alen's life. Of all kinds, there have been a baker's dozen. All have been pretty.

Mr. Van Alen, son-in-law of the late Mrs. Astor and oldest brother-in-law of Colonel Jack Astor, is a most desirable parti. He has houses and lands, stocks and bonds. He owns a gray stone mansion in Newport, a palace in New York and a castle in England. He is so rich—he can wear a monocle and an old Panama hat! He keeps a flock of sheep to crop his Newport lawns, and he could pave his driveway with diamonds if he wanted to.

The widows who have interested him have known all this. It looked good to them.

Miss May Van Alen, who values her liberty and papa's as she does her life, knows it, too. A little widow is a dangerous thing and eternal vigilance is the price of freedom or words to that effect. Oh, the times daughter has had to crush papa's romantic yearnings! There, for instance, was the beautiful Countess Fabriccotti, luscious and lovely as any peach, ready to fall into his mouth. Success seemed ready to perch on her treetop when William K. Vanderbilt, senior, appeared as a rival. In playing one against the other the lovely Countess lost both! Ah, the poor Countess!

She has since consoled herself, but she is the only one of James J.'s widows to do so!

When the Fabriccotti episode closed James J. came back to Newport. "I'll try widows," he said, "but they must be home bred."

In Newport he found the sumptuous Mrs. Gambrell. This was a great find for Jimmy! Mrs. Gambrell's husband had died, leaving her one son and several millions of dollars. Some of this money she spent in building a genuine French chateau on Bellevue avenue and in developing some wonderful gardens.

Mr. Van Alen looked upon her and found her good. He likewise found a rival on the doorstep, Mr. Egerton Winthrop, senior.

Oh, the fun Newport had! The two well-dowered dandies struggling for the smiles of the charming widow!

James J. was tremendously in earnest. He courted the widow in daylight and moonlight. He fairly lived in her lovely rose garden, where there was a secluded Summer house. Mr. Winthrop blocked every move his rival made. The widow had two steady cavaliers, and apparently enjoyed it.

The public bus drivers even scented the fun. They would stop their busses in front of the chateau and shrilly say, "Here lives the Widow Gambrell, who can have Jimmy Van Alen if she wants him, but she also likes Egie Winthrop!"

This is actual fact—or was until the police stopped it. Have you ever heard the bus drivers at Newport explaining things to the marvelling tourist? No?

Just when all seemed propitious for "Jimmy," Mrs. Hermann Oelrichs appeared on the scene and the humorous bus drivers changed their tune! "Here lives the Widow Gambrell, who let Mrs. Hermann Oelrichs take Jimmy Van Alen away from her!"

The season closed. Mr. Van Alen returned to England still uncaught and unwed. And there he found widow number 4—the dazzling, dark-eyed brunette, the fascinating



Mrs. Seth Barton French, Who May Become Mrs. James J. Van Alen.

was that alluring, that oh, so beautiful Mrs. Pedar Bruguiere, who flashed across Newport's skies last Summer. Before her hazel eyes J. J. went down with a sickening thud. He openly deserted his own friends, he neglected to keep engagements. And all for the beautiful Mrs. Bruguiere who had been twice widowed by the decree of the divorce court! Oh death, where is thy sting?

Mrs. Bruguiere's smiles were fought for by half a dozen well-known Newporters. And because of this, the ladies, bless 'em all, were annoyed. Daughter May was most emphatically annoyed. She was peevish, and one expected to see her mount a galling gun on the laws of Wakehurst and fire at all comers.

But Daughter May did not actually have to fire that gun. Mrs. Bruguiere, after having the time of her life bothing the Newport dandies, showed her decided preference for another man and left Papa with her picture and a sinking feeling in his heart.

And where could Papa find comfort? Right at his own gateway! He turned to Mrs. Elsie French Vanderbilt! Mrs. Vanderbilt might have been his granddaughter.

Alas for James J. Mrs. Vanderbilt as a child had been taught to show respect to her elders. She placed Mr. Van A. on a par with her grandfather and was awfully nice to him. But Mr. Van A. did not want to be treated like a grandfather, and he went off to London in a huff.

With his lacerated feelings needing expert surgical treatment, he met, in England, two charming blondes, Mrs. Henry Redmond and Mrs. Seth Barton French. He had known them both in their early days in Newport.

In England they were very good to him. He called at Claridge's one day to get comfort from Mrs. Redmond and he trotted over to the Savoy the next to get comfort from Mrs. French. Those were busy days for Mr. James!

What happened? When Mrs. French, the handsome widow of the late Seth French, wearied

And Eternal Vigilance Is the Price of Liberty--- The Heart Chase of an International Society Millionaire.

of London and of comfortable Mr. James, she went to Paris and worse than all, she told him that she would not come to Newport this season! Oh, ye tears!

Mrs. Redmond when she wearied of London went to New York, telling him she could not spend the Summer in Newport.

But the last two widows relented. Both Mrs. Redmond and Mrs. French did appear in Newport—the former lived on board her steam yacht Sultana.

Yes, Mrs. French spent two weeks at Wakehurst! And Daughter May was perfectly polite to her. And pa-pa? Ah, let us not give pa-pa away! He grew twenty years younger! He was beautiful!

What comes next? Both Mrs. French and Mr. Van Alen are to spend October at the Hot Springs.

And the odds are even now now three to one!

"Oh, the merry widow and the man!"

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This Is Mr. James J. Van Alen, Beside Him Miss May Van Alen, and Next, Widow Mrs. George Law, Former - Widow Countess Fabriccotti, Widow Mrs. William Leeds, Court Widow Mrs. John Jacob Astor and Widow Mrs. Henry S. Redmond. The Very Beautiful Widow Mrs. Pedar Bruguiere is in the Centre.

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